



Procter & Gamble to Drop Ill-Fated Logo

CINCINNATI (AP) — Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham and the archbishop of Chicago couldn't stop recurring "outrageous, vicious lies" about Procter & Gamble Co.'s links to Satanism, and the soap giant has decided to drop its century-old moon-and-stars logo.

"How it started originally we have no idea, and how it restarted we have no idea," P&G spokesman Bill Dobson said Wednesday after the company announced that it would phase out use of the logo on its products.

"The trademark itself won't change in any way," Dobson said. "It will continue to be used extensively as a symbol" on stationery and mailings.

The decision was prompted by frustration over an inability to

quash a wave of rumors that first crested with 15,000 telephone calls from consumers in July 1982, said officials of P&G, which ranked 22nd on the Fortune 500 list of U.S. corporations in 1984 with sales of \$12.94 billion.

The rumors say P&G put the trademark — showing a crescent man in the moon and 13 stars — on all packages as a symbol of its link with Satanism.

"We're referring to them as the outrageous, vicious lies and falsehoods," Dobson said. "It's just ridiculous."

The company says the stars on its 103-year-old trademark honor the original colonies.

P&G, which has a conservative, straight-arrow corporate image, fought back in 1982 with the help

of the Rev. Billy Graham, Moral Majority leader the Rev. Jerry Falwell, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Chicago, and columnist Abigail Van Buren.

The company also filed lawsuits against people who spread rumors — including a Minnesota nursing home's newsletter, a Georgia TV weatherman and a distributor for Amway Products Co. in New Mexico. The rumor died, only to spring back up in late 1984.

More than 14,000 people have called the company about the rumors this year, including more than 7,000 so far this month, Dobson said. In all, more than 100,000 consumers have called or written about the rumors.

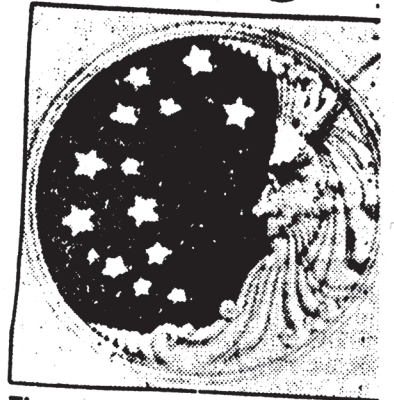
"It's being spread by means of a

one-page flyer that gets duplicated by people thinking they're doing a good deed by circulating these stories," Dobson said. "The thing snowballs very quickly."

"The problem has been that it resurfaced again and has started to take on a new life of its own once again in 1985 as it did in 1982. That has become a major distraction to us again, and for that reason we've taken the steps."

The latest resurgence comes primarily from New Jersey, New York and the Philadelphia area. It is essentially the same rumor as before — that a P&G executive went on a national talk show and said some profits go to Satan and that the logo is a symbol of the devil.

Company executives went to



The moon-and-stars logo has identified P&G products for 134 years.

New York last week to launch their latest offensive against the rumors
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setting up a special toll-free hotline and hiring two professional investigative agencies to help track down the rumor's source.

The trademark is featured on every P&G product, although the demands for more ingredient listings and other graphic changes have sometimes reduced the logo to a circle 1/4-inch in diameter.

"The trademark is so small now that it's not recognizable," Dobson said.

The trademark now appears on such products as Ivory soap, Folger's coffee, Cheer and Tide detergents, Scope mouthwash, Crest toothpaste, Crisco shortening and Jif peanut butter.

Research found that most consumers didn't notice the mark on packages, so the company decided to drop it, Dobson said.

The removal will be done slowly as packages get their usual overhauls. No extra expense will be involved, Dobson said.

"Each product package is changed on an average of at least once a year, for size or color or

graphics or design or any number of reasons," he said.

P&G plans to keep investigating the source of the rumors, he said.

On Wednesday, the company announced third quarter earnings of \$160 million on sales of \$3.35 billion, down from income of \$220 million in the year-ago period, when sales were \$3.28 billion.

The rumor that P&G funnels its profits to Satan takes root in places like the First Baptist Church of Appomattox, Va., where the pastor says he doesn't believe the company or the Rev. Jerry Falwell — he trusts an anonymous leaflet.

The Rev. James H. Johnson says he first saw the leaflet several weeks ago when his daughter brought one home from another Baptist church, which he declined to name.

"A few weeks ago, Johnson distributed copies of the leaflet and asked his congregation — "10 regular members, maybe more," the minister said — not to use the company's products.

The leaflet told the familiar story that the company supports the church of Satan, that a company executive had bragged about it on national television and that the company's moon and stars em-

blem is a Satanic symbol.

Told Wednesday that P&G will remove the logo from its products, Johnson said, "That still don't clear my mind. They are not saying they are not supporting the church of Satan.

"My conviction in my heart is not to buy any more of their products."

Johnson said he had not contacted Procter & Gamble for its response to the leaflet. "A friend of mine wrote them a letter" but hasn't gotten an answer, he said.

Last year, Falwell, the founder of the Moral Majority, denounced the rumors. "It's almost unbelievable that there are still persons who could swallow such a cock-and-bull story," said Falwell.

"Procter & Gamble is an outstanding company and an asset to the nation. ... I'd be very happy to do anything I could to help them."

Asked about that statement Wednesday, Johnson was unmoved.

"Money can buy a lot of folks," he said. "Money can buy lies. Love of money is the root of evil."

Falwell said Wednesday that he was saddened by Johnson's statements and denied ever receiving money from Procter & Gamble.